



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**Region 1**  
**5 Post Office Square, Suite 100**  
**Boston, MA 02109-3912**

May 10, 2010

The Honorable Elaine A. Pluta,  
Mayor the City of Holyoke  
536 Dwight Street  
Holyoke, MA  
01040

Dear Mayor Pluta:

By this letter, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notifies the City of Holyoke that the "Time Critical Removal Action" has been completed at the Parsons Paper Mill in Holyoke, MA. With concurrence from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), the EPA Emergency Planning and Response Branch (EPRB) removed hazardous materials and asbestos that posed an imminent and substantial danger to the public health and welfare of the surrounding community. The amount of asbestos and hazardous wastes removed are as follows:

- five 30-cubic yard roll-off containers with asbestos or asbestos containing material (ACM),
- twenty dump trailer loads of ACM from the burned building sections (totaling 511.62 tons),
- 300 pounds of melamine resin (formaldehyde) ,
- six cubic yards of metal containing ash from the boiler stack,
- 19 55-gallon drums with hazardous wastes (elemental mercury, acids, caustic liquids and solids, oils, and two outside transformers),
- two radioactive sources from the paper machines.

ACM that was structural in nature, such as transite panels along the roof line of Building # 1 was not removed. A small amount of ACM pipe that was not accessible due to structural risks in the burned out section of Building # 3 was also not removed.

As you are aware, the pre-fire Parsons Paper Mill buildings were abandoned and in disrepair. The fire furthermore created additional structural safety hazards by burning major portions of the buildings. As the EPA removal action progressed, and was about to be completed, I felt it necessary to inform the City's Department Directors, and the MassDEP, of the safety hazards the EPA would address before it completed its work, and

fully demobilized from the Site. The information meeting was held on March 23, 2010, and since then the following tasks have been completed:

- Covered the two ceramic vats and one stainless steel lined wooden vat that were exposed during demolition activities. The vats were covered with wood, built with 2x8 floor joists overlain with 3/4 –inch exterior grade plywood measuring 16 feet by 16 feet. Bricks were placed on top of the covers as an additional deterrent for access. The stainless steel lined vat was covered with a steel plate measuring 10 feet by 5 feet and two large blocks of sandstone were placed on top;
- Covered the two ceramic vats found in Building # 1 with layers of high visibility fence to prevent physical injury as well;
- Removed two large metal tanks, one 8,000 gallons, the other 10,000 gallons from the burned out section behind Building # 2. Any ACM on these tanks was removed and the tanks were moved down the driveway next to the end of Building # 1. The tanks have been placed with the manways on the ground to prevent anyone from entering;
- Nailed shut with wood barricades all access areas that were opened to get into the buildings;
- Installed a section of high visibility fence around the open excavation behind Building # 2 where the two large tanks were removed;
- Installed two sections of chain link. One was a 50-foot section in front of the first penstock behind the buildings, and the other was a 200-foot section from the front gate to the side of Building # 3. This section of fence also has two 10-foot swing gates attached for access by trucks or machines into the site along the burned out sections; and,
- Left on site two stockpiles, one very large of metal debris alongside Building # 2 and one wood debris pile between Buildings # 2 and # 3. There are also a smaller metal and wood debris pile located along the penstock side of the property on top of the remaining floor of the demolished building.

Please be advised that the EPA EPRB does not perform operation and maintenance (O&M) at removal sites after it completes the associated removal actions. Henceforth, any future O&M issues that are brought to the attention of the EPA EPRB, will be referred to the City of Holyoke.

If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 617-918-1284.

Sincerely,

Athanasios Hatzopoulos  
On-Scene Coordinator

cc: EPA-Novick, Steve; Fennelly, Sharon; Katzen, Amelia  
Mass DEP- Slowick, Dave